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ABSTRACT

In 1989, the Commission on the Future of the University of Kentucky Community College System issued recommendations for improving the colleges' role, effectiveness, and potential. This report assesses the progress made as of 1995 with respect to the recommendations, focusing on the areas of funding, governance, postsecondary technical education, economic and workforce development, access to higher education, effectiveness and accountability, and public awareness. For each of these issues, the report provides a summary of the current status as well as Commission recommendations and the rationale behind the recommendations. Major recommendations for 1995 include the following: (1) provide a 7% increase in higher education funding for each year of the 1996-98 biennium; (2) develop more collaborative processes and partnerships that result in joint ventures with the Kentucky TECH System for community development; (3) increase responses to business and industry needs with technical degree programs, job specific training and retraining, and services; (4) emphasize basic skills education and training; (5) increase the use of innovative methods for greater statewide access to higher education and public service offerings; (6) launch an educational campaign about the purpose, roles, and value of the community colleges to the community; (7) provide statewide advocacy and networking of the community colleges; and (8) strengthen the effectiveness of the local advisory boards. (TGI)

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FUTURES COMMISSION REPORT

Second Edition

1996

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PATHWAY TO KENTUCKY'S

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UK

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

JC 960 107

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Community Colleges PATHWAY TO KENTUCKY'S FUTURE

Report of the
Commission on the Future of
the University of Kentucky
Community College System

Second Edition
1996

UK COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

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Message from the Co-Chairman

We the members of the *1995 Futures Commission* accepted with pride the responsibility for charting the System's vision into the 21st century and beyond. We strongly believe in the direct link between educational attainment and economic growth as Kentucky strives to remain competitive in the global marketplace. This conviction adds momentum to our efforts to maintain and enhance the strong, statewide system of community colleges created and established by visionary leaders some three decades ago.

It is our conviction that the Community College System's progress on the nine recommendations from the *1988-89 Futures Commission* is solid and impressive. The many accomplishments during that seven-year period include an overall enrollment increase of 32 percent, a 54 percent increase in the number of graduates, a new distance learning network, innovative KERA partnerships, economic development initiatives, joint ventures with Kentucky TECH, and a successful private gifts campaign.

Under the leadership of the University of Kentucky, the Community College System has excelled and matured. The 14 community colleges are ideally positioned to ***shine bright lights in the four quarters of our Commonwealth.*** Our broadest recommendation is that the executive and legislative policymakers ensure that funding allocated to the Community College System is equitable and adequate. **Our goal is to make one of the best community college systems in the nation even better.**

Sincerely,

Wm B Sturgill

William B. Sturgill, Co-Chairman
Commission on the Future of the
UK Community College System

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Recommendations

The Commission recommends that the Kentucky Executive and Legislative Policymakers

- **Provide a seven percent increase in funding for higher education for each year of the 1996-98 biennium to be allocated for current services, equity, and performance based on the Kentucky Higher Education Funding Distribution Model.**

- **Provide funding in subsequent biennia that will move the funding level of higher education institutions up to a level at least equal to those in benchmark states and further ensure equity in funding among the Kentucky higher education institutions.**

- **Ensure that the Community College System's affiliation and governance as an integral part of the University of Kentucky is maintained for reasons of quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.**

- **Add a Community College System alumnus/alumna to the Council on Higher Education.**

- **Work toward a merged system of Kentucky TECH postsecondary vocational-technical schools and centers and the UK Community College System.**

- **Include the community colleges as major providers of economic and workforce development activities when administering block grant funds.**

The Commission recommends that the University of Kentucky Community Colleges

- Develop more collaborative processes and partnerships that result in joint ventures with the Kentucky TECH System.
- Increase responses to business and industry needs with technical degree programs, job specific training/retraining, and services.
- Increase the emphasis on basic skills education and training to foster an attitude of lifelong learning.
- Develop and formalize additional partnerships for the purpose of community development.
- Continue to provide access to higher education and continuing education activities for individuals from all walks of life, including recent high school graduates, older adults, culturally diverse populations, economically disadvantaged individuals, academically gifted students, underprepared students, and persons with disabilities.
- Increase the use of distance learning technologies, creative community partnerships, collaborative ventures, and other innovative methods that provide greater statewide access to higher education and public service offerings.
- Continue to assess their effectiveness in fulfilling the threefold mission, and use the results for continuous improvement.
- Launch an educational campaign about the purpose (mission), roles, and value of the community colleges to our communities and the Commonwealth.
- Provide for statewide advocacy and networking of the community colleges throughout the System.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of the local advisory boards.

Three Decades of Success

In 1995, the Futures Commission convened in Lexington to assess the Community College System's progress in achieving recommendations set forth in 1988-89. Summarized in one sentence, our findings reaffirm the Community College System and the tremendous progress made during these past seven years.

Indeed, the successes are many, too many to list in this report. Still, we could not resist including a few. You will find them highlighted throughout the margins of the report.

However, we also found cause for concern, particularly that the momentum is lagging today. Therefore, this report identifies areas that need attention. In fact, we have identified strategic steps that can help the community colleges regain the momentum so desperately needed to break the cycle of low educational attainment in our state. The need for an educated populace is now so interwoven with economic prosperity that, like threads in fabric, it is hard to separate them without unraveling the fabric. Therefore, the role of the community colleges in the future of our state has never been more important.

1962
Legislation Mandates a Statewide Community College System

1964
UK Board of Trustees Establishes the University of Kentucky Community College System

Proceeding on Course

Our assessments are based on the threefold mission designed by the 1962 General Assembly when they established the Community College System: pre-baccalaureate education, technical career programs, and continuing education. This mandated mission is still valid today. Although three decades old, it positions the System to respond to challenges in the next century and beyond.

More recently, the Governor's Higher Education Review Commission recommended in 1993 refinements in the mission to emphasize institutional uniqueness.[1] As approved by the Council on Higher Education, the System's refined mission includes such areas as:

- broad access to higher education
- high-quality programs to meet the needs of the colleges' immediate communities
- teaching
- student services, including developmental studies
- workforce training for business and industry
- collaborative ventures with other higher education and/or postsecondary institutions

Serving the Masses

Again, the progress is remarkable. The Community College System now serves more than one-third of all undergraduate students in Kentucky's public institutions of higher learning. An additional 400,000 individuals benefit annually from lifelong learning experiences provided by the 14 community colleges.

In addition, remarkable advances in communications — including telecourses, one-way voice and image; compressed video, two-way voice and image; and courses designed by electronic mail — enable the colleges to offer degrees via distance learning. In fact, Ashland, Madisonville, Paducah, Prestonsburg, and Southeast Community Colleges are part of the national "Going the Distance" collaborative educational effort involving 22 public television stations, colleges, universities, and the Public Broadcasting Service. We encourage the System to expand this to all of the colleges. These high-tech teaching strategies combined with the Internet's World Wide Web and access to the Kentucky Library Network create unlimited opportunities for the masses to gain access to higher education.

New telecommunications and the historic adoption of the statewide General Education Transfer Agreement with Kentucky's public universities will provide new opportunities that currently are beyond our imagination.

Thank You

Our message to those who serve in Kentucky's community colleges is simple: thank you for a job well done. To the legislators who serve our state, our message is also simple: thank you for your past support. We ask that you read this report with an eye toward enhancing a system that unlocks the true wealth found in our state — the potential of its people.

Mission

Pre-Baccalaureate Education

Technical Career Programs

Continuing Education

- Professional Development
- Occupational Training
- Life Enrichment

Funding

The Community College System was funded at only 67.3 percent of the appropriation funding formula established by the Council on Higher Education when the Futures Commission conducted its first study in 1988-89. Today, that percentage has dropped even lower – to 60.5 percent.

Meanwhile, other numbers have continued to rise. The Community College System traditionally serves more than one-third of all undergraduate students enrolled in Kentucky public higher education. Since 1988, community colleges have experienced a 31.9 percent increase in enrollment.

This enrollment increase should be good news and certainly is for the students enrolled in the 14 community colleges. For the Community College System, however, it is akin to Charles Dicken's *Tale of Two Cities* — the best of times and the worst of times.[3] In essence, the funding inequities are due primarily to successful enrollment growth. While the System's budget has increased in total dollars, rapid increases in enrollment and inflation have actually left the System, relatively speaking, with less funding per full-time equivalent student for classroom instruction, learning resources, and support programs necessary for a diverse student population.

As citizens of the Commonwealth and members of the Futures Commission, we are concerned about the serious implications this has for the future prosperity of our state and its people. A Project 21 white paper from the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce summarized the situation:

> "Our state cannot risk a decline in the quality of our community colleges just as the relative importance of this system is growing. Our state parallels the rest of the country in the growing need for people to fill technical or semi-professional roles. In fact, we can't do it fast enough to meet existing industry needs or the needs in the allied health field. In many cases, these positions require associate degrees which are offered by community colleges. Moreover, many argue that community colleges are the most cost-effective provider of training programs for the private-sector workforce. . . . Also consider the effort in other states. Even states which traditionally have not emphasized funding for higher education are now committed to doing so. And these states are our biggest competitors in the race for new and expanding industry."[4]

Recommendations

Acknowledging the essential role that community colleges play in our state's economic future, we make two specific recommendations:

- Provide a seven percent increase in funding for higher education for each year of the 1996-98 biennium to be allocated for current services, equity, and performance based on the Kentucky Higher Education Funding Distribution Model.
- Provide funding in subsequent biennia that will move the funding level of higher education institutions up to a level at least equal to those in benchmark states and further ensure equity in funding among the Kentucky higher education institutions.

Rationale

It is tempting to simply reel off statistics to reinforce the need for adequate funding. Numbers explain the situation well, and they are in abundant supply. For example, Kentucky is 48th in the percent of the adult population with college degrees; and we are similarly ranked in terms of per capita income and the percent of the state workforce in management or professional jobs. However, there are more than numbers to this story.

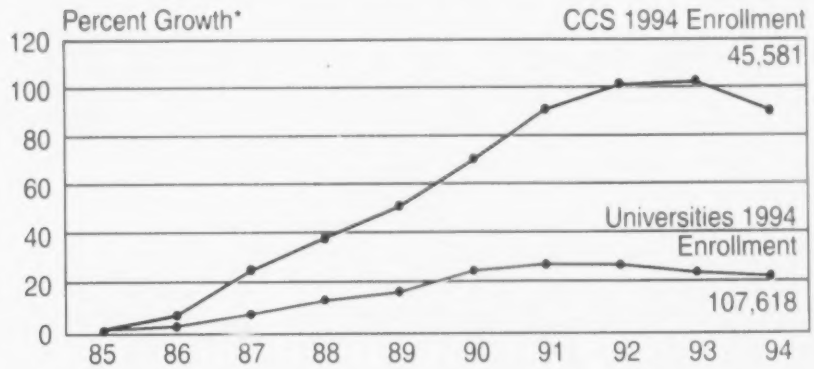
There are the students. In addition to the traditional, well prepared high school graduates, community colleges teach hundreds of underprepared, nontraditional, economically disadvantaged, placebound adults. A variety of academic and student support services are needed to ensure that every student who attends a community college has the opportunity to succeed. These services include assessment and placement centers; reading, mathematics, and writing remedial offerings; academic advising; counseling; career guidance; study skills centers; and open computer laboratories. Today, only limited support is available for these important programs; and student needs go unmet.

Then there is the future of Kentucky. For anyone who would simply write off nontraditional or underprepared students, consider what that would mean to the future for all of us. Ron Crouch, director of the State Data Center, notes that in the next decade, Kentucky demographics anticipate a significant decline in the number of young people, ages 25 to 34. Unlike previous decades when unqualified workers were dispensable, these potential workers will be essential in the years ahead. To quote Mr. Crouch, "We

"The future of education in Kentucky, no doubt is through the Community College System."

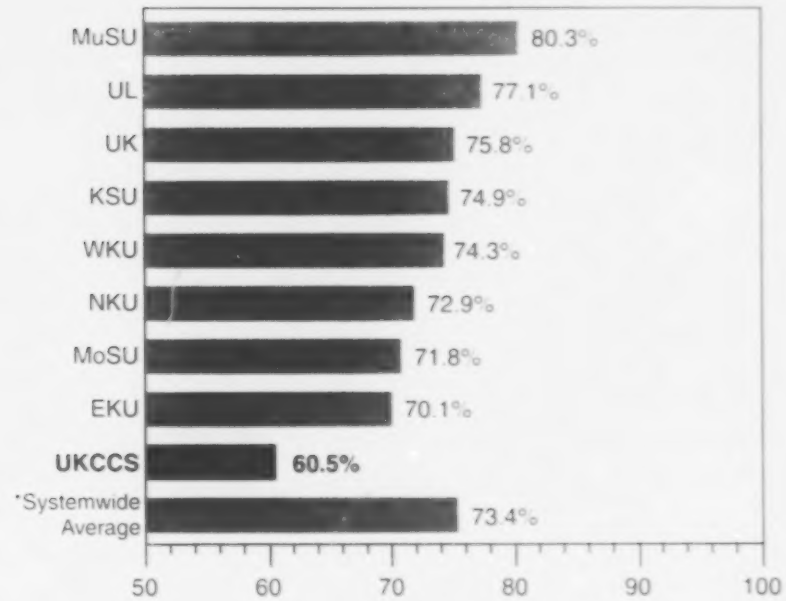
Oscar Hornsby
Business Executive
Somerset

1985 - 94
Headcount Enrollment Growth
Kentucky Public Universities and The Community College System



*Cumulative change based on headcount enrollment in Fall 1985. CCS 23,767; Universities 88,248. Source: CHE

Percent of Formula Funding 1995-96
KY Public Higher Education Institutions



Source: CHE

Kentucky – Last In Funding for Community Colleges

Appropriations per FTE Student In Public Community Colleges SREB States 1994-95

Source: CHE and SREB

are moving toward an economy — whether it is in manufacturing, services, retail, etc. — that will require 'knowledge' workers rather than 'muscle' workers. Without these knowledge workers, Kentucky simply cannot compete."[1]

Therefore, we find that lack of adequate and equitable funding is the System's most critical issue. In fact, the Community College System ranks the lowest in funding from all perspectives.

One way of examining the extent of financial support available for higher education is to compute the amount of state appropriation available for each full-time equivalent (FTE) student. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) reports these data. When compared with other public, two-year institutions in the 15 SREB states, Kentucky's Community College System ranked LAST in 1988 and still ranked LAST in 1995. Additionally, these data indicate that the Community College System is minimally funded when compared with other Kentucky higher education institutions and with the Kentucky TECH postsecondary vocational schools.[2]

The result today is reduced offerings and services and decreased enrollments in 1994 and 1995. The result tomorrow could well be a less educated citizenry unable to compete in the global, competitive economy.

Strategic Steps

- Support the funding formula objective as recommended by the Council on Higher Education.
- Support the Council on Higher Education's revised method of distributing funds to higher education institutions, emphasizing equity and institutional performance; and ensure that the Community College System receives "equity catch-up funds."
- Provide greater state support for underprepared students and nontraditional students served by the community colleges.
- Correct the historically low salaries of faculty and staff.
- Upgrade and catch-up in the area of instructional computer / information technology support.
- Correct the faculty and staff shortage problems.
- Implement new mobile programs, especially in health-related fields, and other state-of-the-art programs in response to business and industry.

Appropriation Per FTE Student 1994-95

KY Public Higher Education Institutions and KY TECH (Post-Secondary)

Kentucky State University	$7,942
University of Louisville	$5,495
Kentucky TECH System *(Post-Secondary)*	$4,838
Murray State University	$4,837
University of Kentucky	$4,517
Western Kentucky University	$4,003
Morehead State University	$3,947
Eastern Kentucky University	$3,690
Northern Kentucky University	$2,795
UK Community College System	**$2,284**

Source: CHE and SREB

Governance

When the 1962 General Assembly abandoned the extension-center philosophy in favor of a comprehensive Community College System, they provided a way to expand services statewide and create educational programs designed specifically for individual and community needs. This farsighted approach has proven successful.

The Community College System currently operates as one of the two systems under the leadership of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees. As a Commission, we find that the positive link must be sustained between the University of Kentucky University System and the Community College System. Thus, this study focuses on the impact this governance structure has on the Community College System, and offers four recommendations.

Recommendations

- Ensure that the Community College System's affiliation and governance as an integral part of the University of Kentucky is maintained for reasons of quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Add a Community College System alumnus/alumna to the Council on Higher Education.
- Provide for statewide advocacy and networking of the community colleges throughout the System.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of the local advisory boards.

Rationale

Fostering professional development, sabbatical opportunities, and interaction among University System and Community College System faculty and staff promote continuous improvement in programs and services offered by the community colleges. Other quality efforts include open dialogue between university deans and community college presidents and dialog between university and community college academic councils.

Oversight by the UK Board of Trustees and University administration ensures accountability and promotes strategic planning and wise use of resources. Numerous studies during the past 30 years highlight the sound management, effectiveness, and efficiency of the Community College System as part of the University. For example, overhead costs are less than $1.4 million for services such as purchasing, capital construction, financial aid, accounting, internal auditing, personnel, and legal.

The 1988-89 Commission stated it well, ". . . Community College System leaders have succeeded in fulfilling the vision of a statewide educational system open to all, with autonomy at the local level and common goals at the state level."[5] Therefore, members of the 1995 Commission believe anyone who would propose a change in governance must provide proof to demonstrate how the community colleges and the Commonwealth would be better served, how the colleges would serve more students at a lesser cost, and how the academic quality would be improved.

Other points are important to note. First, the community colleges need representation on the Council for Higher Education. The Council is composed of lay citizens who represent all of higher education but include at least one alumni member from each public university. To ensure that the community college perspective is clearly articulated, we recommend that the executive and legislative policymakers add a Community College System alumnus/alumna to the Council.

To strengthen statewide advocacy for community colleges, we believe it is important to provide statewide networking of the community colleges throughout the System. Networking allows innovative programs and services to benefit the greatest number. For example, the National Science Foundation "Advanced Technological Educa-

■

Prestonsburg Community College, in partnership with the UK Medical Center Student Health Service, opened a Student Health Clinic in January 1995.

tion" grant project involves all 14 community colleges and the University System mathematics department. Results will include collaborative learning, state-of-the-art networked computer classrooms at each of the community college campuses, and innovative teaching strategies.

Finally, to strengthen the effectiveness of the community college advisory boards, we believe the colleges must clarify the mission, role, and expectations of advisory board members. These individuals are key players in assisting the colleges to respond to complex issues in a rapidly changing environment, and they must have a clear understanding of their roles.

Strategic Steps

- Ensure that the Community College System and the University System remain united as an academic community dedicated to the accomplishment of their missions for the benefit of the Commonwealth.
- Provide for a community college alumnus/alumna to be a member of the Council on Higher Education.
- Extend the local connections with advisory boards, foundation boards, alumni, and other advocates into a statewide citizens' network.
- Involve community college faculty and staff in a statewide network for formulating new program ideas that can benefit the entire state.
- Develop suggested criteria for the selection and appointment of advisory board members.
- Increase the involvement of local advisory boards in the planning and implementation of offerings and services in response to community needs.
- Provide a systemwide orientation for new advisory board members.

Criteria for a Successful Community College System

A statewide operation

An effective system organization

Strong support of a governing board

Authority and responsibility for strategic planning

Authority and responsibility to administer fiscal and personnel resources

An effective evaluation process which demonstrates accountability

A position of influence within the organizational structure

Authority to develop and provide programs related to local needs

Local leadership and support

Statewide and local operational flexibility

Source: 1988 SCI Futures Commission

Postsecondary Technical Education

The stakes are enormous. Price Waterhouse says "the success and failure of firms hinge on the knowledge and capabilities of the workforce."[1] Likewise, the Kentucky Science and Technology Council says, "The future vitality of American business is linked to the level of skill of its workers."[2]

Those statements are from two separate reports issued by different organizations with different goals, but they offer one conclusion: postsecondary education is the only route that does not lead to a dead end on the road to economic prosperity. The Southern Growth Policies Board offers some facts that clearly support this. The Board said that the median level of education required for new jobs will be 13.5 years of school, compared to only 12.8 years for the current workforce. In addition, they report that more than 60 percent of new jobs created in the South by the year 2000 will require education and training beyond high school.[3]

The stakes are no less enormous for the people involved. Study after study, census after census confirm that increased educational levels go hand-in-hand with increased income.

The community colleges are a lead provider of education and workforce training in our state. If we are to meet the challenges presented by the global economy and the rapidly changing workplace, the colleges must continue to provide statewide access to quality technical and transfer degree programs, specialized training, and entrepreneurial services.

■ **Pilot 1 + 1 Associate in Applied Science Degree in Technical Studies Program in place at Paducah Community College and West Kentucky TECH.**

The System's 30-year plus track record speaks for itself. Others also add their voices to the importance and value of this role. In fact, in a recent report, the Kentucky Science and Technology Council listed expanded business-assistance efforts at the state level and at Kentucky's community colleges and universities as part of the progress Kentucky has made toward building a modern competitive economy.

Still, even a cursory review of newspaper clippings from across the state reveals that the relationship between the community colleges and state vocational technical schools continues to receive scrutiny. With ever-tightening budgets and increasing demands to avoid duplication, this scrutiny is certain to continue.

Recommendations

Therefore, we offer two recommendations, one for the short term and one for the long term.

In the short term, we recommend that the UK Community College System:

- Develop more collaborative processes and partnerships that result in joint ventures with the Kentucky TECH System.

In the long term, we recommend that the executive and legislative policymakers:

- Work toward a merged system of Kentucky TECH postsecondary vocational-technical schools and centers and the UK Community College System.

UKCCS-KY TECH Shared Facilities

Bell County Campus—Middlesboro

Allied Health Building—Paducah

Proposed Regional Technology Center—Hopkinsville

Rationale

The Community College System and the postsecondary Kentucky TECH System both provide open access, quality education, technical training, and public service. The 1995 *Workforce Training Report* prepared for the Interim Joint Committee on Economic Development states, "There is similarity in the role of Kentucky TECH, the UK Community College System and the state universities as they relate to technical and occupational programming."[10]

While the two systems share similarities, they also have differences. The level of some of the technical and general studies courses differ. Another difference is the link between the community college associate degree technical programs and the more complex technological programs at the university level. The governance structures for the two systems also differ. Finally, the Kentucky TECH programs and the community college programs may prepare students for entry into a given occupation at different levels, for example, practical nurses versus registered nurses.

Regardless of these similarities and differences or perhaps because of them, Kentucky needs both. In fact, educational leaders in various parts of the state are demonstrating that the two systems can work together to form an effective, seamless education continuum.

The wide array of community college partnerships with Kentucky TECH schools, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, civic groups, and health-care providers can serve as models for creating new and varied partnerships.

Thus, in the short term, we call upon the colleges to work with schools, businesses, and students to create additional school-to-work programs, initiating and overseeing these programs to ensure that students have unlimited opportunities. The Tech Prep partnerships serve as an excellent springboard. Furthermore, the One-Stop Career Center partnership network provides linkages with Kentucky's economic development efforts and consolidation of employment and training programs.

In the long term, merging the Kentucky TECH System and the UK Community College System would enhance the state's efforts to ensure a job-ready workforce. National studies on workforce training, including *Workforce 2000*, point to the need for a combination of college-level, world-class technical education and training.

A merged system would provide adult literacy programs; adult basic education; multiple levels of training for business and industry; certificate, diploma, and associate degree technical programs; college-level general studies; transfer programs to senior institutions;

Joint Programs with KY TECH

Automotive Technology

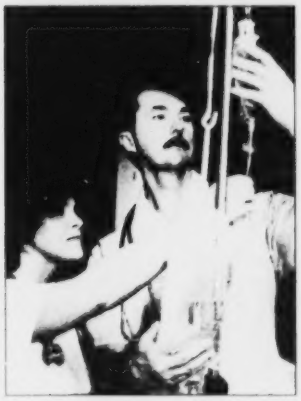
Biomedical Equipment Technician

Radiography

Respiratory Care

Business Technology—Food Service Management

Engineering Technology—Computer Repair



and life enrichment activities. Unnecessary duplication would be eliminated by meshing offerings that are demonstrably equivalent. Furthermore, the accountability process already in place (KRS 164.095) would serve all postsecondary technical education.

Merging the Kentucky TECH System and the UK Community College System would eliminate the confusion that students, businesses, and industries experience when trying to match workers and training programs. A merger would create new alternatives for workforce development. The synergistic results would empower the state with a new spirit of creativity in the area of economic development.

Strategic Steps

- Develop and formalize additional partnerships for the purpose of community development.
- Include the community colleges as major providers of economic and workforce development activities when administering block grant funds.
- Review and develop additional synergistic relationships with state agencies, business and industry.
- Establish additional business and industry technical assistance centers.

- Develop new mobile health programs and other technical programs in response to community needs.
- Expand the Paducah Community College - Kentucky TECH pilot Technical Studies project to additional programs and to all community colleges.
- Develop additional economic development training partnerships with the Kentucky TECH System.
- Initiate faculty-industrial exchange programs.
- Increase partnerships that ensure that Adult Learning Centers, literacy training, GED preparation, and testing are available where needed.
- Increase the availability of computer/information technology support for the technical career programs and workforce training.
- Use distance learning technology for education and workforce training.
- Use feasibility studies, strategic implementation plans, national models, joint task forces, and other strategies to set the stage for a statewide merger.

■

A Model

North Carolina's Community College System offers certificates, diplomas, and degree programs, and is credited for much of the economic development success in the state.

■

Articulation Agreements with KY TECH

Business & Computer Technology

Dental Hygiene

Engineering Technology

Medical Laboratory Technician—Certificate (AS)

Nursing

Radiography

Respiratory Care

Biomedical Equipment Technician

Mining Technology

Economic and Workforce Development

> ***"Skills and education are emerging as a fault line dividing competitive businesses and faltering ones, professionally successful individuals and struggling ones. That fault line is widening — a disturbing trend with real economic and social ramifications."***
>
> **National Center on the Educational Quality of the Workforce**[11]

This quotation was excerpted from a new study done by the University of Pennsylvania and administered by the U.S. Census Bureau. The data it contains are new. The message, however, is not. For years, leaders have understood the indisputable correlation between workforce development education and economic prosperity — both for individuals and Kentucky. In view of limited resources, the only question today is how best to provide the education and training that is essential in today's global economy.

By virtue of their local base and mission, the 14 community colleges are uniquely positioned to provide this education and training. In fact, two parts of their threefold mission pertain to economic and workforce development. First, the Community College System offers 29 quality technical programs that lead not only to an associate degree in applied science but to real jobs in the real world that pay real wages. Second, the Community College System's mission statement as defined by the Council on Higher Education says the primary purpose of the System's public service or continuing education component is to meet the needs of the local communities, "especially workforce training for business and industry."

Indeed, this role is already being fulfilled. The *1995 Kentucky Higher Education Accountability Report* includes a plethora of examples of the community colleges' focus on continuing education offerings that directly promote economic development.[12] Examples include customized training, ISO 9000 certification, manufacturing related education, computer applications, American Management Association courses, and quality improvement offerings. A self-contained Mobile Training Unit equipped with state-of-the-art computer equipment delivers on-site training to businesses and industries across the state. The Business and Industry Technical Assistance Centers at Elizabethtown, Hazard, and Madisonville Community Colleges offer practical instruction in developing new businesses and improving existing ones. The list goes on *(and on)*.

"We can count on the community college to be a portion of our training program. . . ."

Tim Gardner
Scott Paper Company
Owensboro

Recommendations

We commend the colleges for these essential workforce development efforts. Still, we recommend that the community colleges expand their roles. We offer three specific recommendations to the colleges:

- Increase responses to business and industry needs with technical degree programs, job specific training/retraining, and services.
- Increase the emphasis on basic skills education and training to foster an attitude of lifelong learning.
- Develop and formalize additional partnerships for the purpose of community development.

Furthermore, we recommend that the executive and legislative policymakers:

- Include the community colleges as major providers of economic and workforce development activities when administering block grant funds.

"Elizabethtown Community College's Center for Quality Training is an indispensable partner in our drive to maintain our world class position."

Claud Richardson
Dow Corning E-Town

Rationale

The community colleges have taken the lead in providing education and workforce training in our state. In fact, business and industry noncredit education and training dominate the continuing education programs at the colleges (as measured by budget and number of continuing education units awarded to participants). During 1993-94, the System's total expenditure for "educational and general public service" was slightly more than $8 million, a 33 percent increase over the previous year. The majority of these funds were self-generated, with only a small portion of the revenue being derived from state sources.

However, the vast needs within the business community demand increased responses. In a recent *Lexington Herald-Leader* editorial, Bill Bishop cited work done by Bill Galston, a professor at the University of Maryland who was deputy assistant to the president for domestic policy in the Clinton administration.[13] Galston said there is only one road to widespread prosperity. This is by building an economy through large investments in skills and education.

To be effective for business, this training must be readily available, reasonably priced, and tailored to the needs of business.

The community colleges are ideally equipped for this role. Business people throughout the state already speak highly of the colleges' training and retraining activities. Numerous efforts to enhance basic skills such as the Skills Enhancement Center, a partnership between Jefferson Community College and the Ford Louisville Assembly Plant, provide models for the system. Models also abound for successful partnerships for community development. In fact, KERA-related partnerships yield innovative and exciting activities that attracted more than 48,000 participants during 1994-95. The Tech Prep partnerships

■

Prestonsburg Community College's new mobile Dental Hygiene Program began in 1995.

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Community College System Career Programs

Allied Health & Nursing
Bio-Medical Equipment Technician
Clinical Laboratory Technician
Dental Hygiene
Dental Laboratory Technology
Nuclear Medicine Technology
Nursing
Occupational Therapy Assistant
Physical Therapist Assistant
Radiography
Respiratory Care

Business and Related Technologies
Accounting Technology
Business Technology
Computer Information Systems
Office Systems
Real Estate

Engineering and Related Technologies
Architectural Technology
Engineering Technology
Industrial-Electrical Technology
Quality Technology
Mining Technology

Other
Automotive Technology
Commercial Art Technology
Communications Technology
Culinary Arts
Early Childhood Education
Environmental Science Technology
Fire and Arson Technology
Forest and Wood Technology*
Human Services
Law Enforcement Technology

**Implementation Pending*

with secondary schools, Kentucky TECH schools and business and industry also serve as an excellent springboard for school-to-work opportunities.

In short, we simply reiterate what we said in our 1989 report, "It is imperative that the state's economic development strategies include community colleges and that the colleges actively participate in . . . economic development programs and partnerships."[11]

One way this must be done is by including the community colleges when administering block grant funds. The Congressional effort to transform funding for major federal workforce development and training programs into block grants to be awarded to the states is in its final, critical stages. These programs include the Job Training Partnership Act, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, and the Adult Education Act. We believe it is critical that our governor and other state leaders use a collaborative process in developing the education portion of any state plan for administering federal block grants. This is consistent with the approach nationwide. It is also imperative in view of the offerings and services provided by the community colleges – technical associate degree programs, Business and Industry Technical Assistance Centers, workplace literacy programs, basic adult education, vocational rehabilitation, one-stop career centers, and other similar programs.

Strategic Steps

- Strengthen and increase partnerships with Kentucky TECH, the Cabinet for Workforce Development, the Cabinet for Economic Development, and the Bluegrass State Skills Corporation.
- Work with schools, businesses, and students to create additional school-to-work programs, initiating and overseeing these programs to ensure that students have appropriate learning environments and workforce opportunities.
- Review and develop additional synergistic relationships with state agencies, businesses, and industries.*
- Establish additional business and industry technical assistance centers.*
- Develop new mobile health programs and other technical programs in response to community needs.*
- Expand the Paducah Community College - Kentucky TECH pilot Technical Studies project to additional programs and to all community colleges.*
- Develop additional economic development training partnerships with the Kentucky TECH System.*
- Initiate faculty-industrial exchange programs.*
- Increase partnerships that ensure that Adult Learning Centers, literacy training, GED preparation and testing are available where needed.*
- Increase the availability of computer / information technology support for the technical career programs and workforce training.*
- Use distance learning technology for education and workforce training.*
- Expand and enhance economic development outreach into the rural regions.
- Conduct periodic assessments of local education and training needs.

■

Henderson Community College's Adult Learning Center provides a place for adults to learn to read, study for their GED, and study English as a second language.

** Step listed also in "Postsecondary Technical Education" section.*

Access With Excellence

For the first time in years, the college-going rate — the rate of attendance in colleges and universities from recent high school graduates — has risen to the point to where Kentucky is competitive in the Southeast and reasonably competitive across the nation. The percentage of adults in Kentucky who have completed at least some college has also climbed — from 21.8 percent in 1980 to 32.8 percent in 1990.[1]

"I chose Jefferson Community College because it was accessible. I am visually impaired, and the counselors have been wonderful about helping me adjust to college life."

Christopher Simpson

Opportunities for African-American students are expanding through initiatives outlined in the *Kentucky Plan for Equal Opportunities in Higher Education*.[2] This has been aided by the addition of a full-time minority affairs coordinator who provides statewide leadership for the recruitment and retention of African-American students, a move we commend. In fact, African-American enrollment represented 7.2 percent of total enrollment for the System in 1995, a steady (though slower than hoped for) increase from 5.7 percent in the fall of 1990.

False modesty aside, the simple fact is that these achievements would not have happened without the Community College System. We commend the community colleges for providing broad access to higher education through the extended-campus sites and centers in the underserved communities of Kentucky. We know that limited funding, faculty and staff shortages, historically low salaries, antiquated equipment, and inadequate academic computing support have taken their toll.

Even with the hope offered by the educational trends noted above, Kentucky still ranks 48th nationally in the percentage of adults who are college graduates.

In addition, access is threatened for lower and middle-income students. Since the Council on Higher Education developed a tuition policy in 1981, based on ability to pay criteria and the level of tuition increases in surrounding states, tuition has grown more rapidly than the cost of living. In fact, during the seven-year period from 1988 to 1995, tuition for full-time resident community college students increased 69 percent. Constantly rising tuition is a serious threat to community college access.

■ **Maysville Community College's Licking Valley extended-campus center approved by the Council on Higher Education in 1995.**

■ **More than 27% of all community college students were enrolled in developmental courses during fall 1992.**

Recommendations

We know that the Community College System is committed to providing access with excellence and that responding to all who enter the open door has stretched the System to the breaking point. We have addressed the need for adequate and equitable funding elsewhere in this report. But, we also have two additional recommendations pertaining to access:

- Continue to provide access to higher education and continuing education activities for individuals from all walks of life, including recent high school graduates, older adults, culturally diverse populations, economically disadvantaged individuals, academically gifted students, underprepared students, and persons with disabilities.
- Increase the use of distance learning technologies, creative community partnerships, collaborative ventures, and other innovative methods that provide greater statewide access to higher education and public service offerings.

Rationale

If we are going to bring up the economic level of Kentucky over time, we must bring up the educational level of Kentuckians. Access to higher education is essential to this quest.

Often, access is equated with geography. During the 1995 gubernatorial campaign, both candidates discussed the number of counties in Kentucky in which courses are offered.

Some people call it access run amok. In November 1995, the Council on Higher Education placed a moratorium on new extended-campus centers and sites until a review of its extended-campus policy is completed, probably in July 1996.

However, access is more than geography. We choose to broaden the definition of access to include all activities that provide greater opportunities for students to participate in higher education.

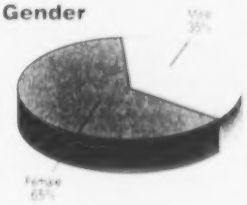
From the student's perspective, access means much more than sites and centers. This is particularly true for a student population described as 53 percent first-generation college students, 46 percent economically disadvantaged, and 49 percent age 25 or older. Historically, graduation and persistence rates at community colleges have been lower than those at baccalaureate institutions. This is due in large part to the student demographics and the nature of the community college mission. For the UK Community College System, 51.5 percent of the first-time, full-time, degree-seeking freshmen have either transferred, graduated, or continued their education at a community college three years after their initial enrollment. Moreover, the rate of transfer of UK Community College System students is one of the highest in the nation.

Access includes open admissions. This enables all Kentucky residents who graduate from high school and any non-high school graduate who earns a GED certificate (or is eligible to take the GED) to enroll in a community college.

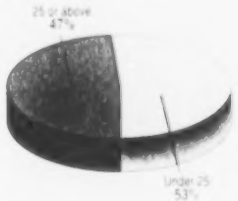
Upon admission, access means that every student has the opportunity to succeed academically. It includes a choice of technical career and transfer

1995 Enrollment

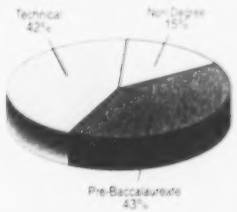
Gender



Age



Degree Type



Source: CHE & UKCCS

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Through the UKCCS library network, students have access to over 2.5 million titles.

■

Murray State University offers about 35 upper-level courses each semester at Paducah Community College.

programs, high quality classroom instruction, state-of-the-art learning resources and laboratories, and adequate support services. Student support services, for example, include academic assessment and placement centers, and developmental courses in reading, writing, and mathematics for those who are not prepared for college-level courses. A nurturing environment, academic advising, career guidance, study skills centers, tutoring services, and open computer laboratories are all a part of access. For lower and middle-income students, access means low tuition. For students with disabilities, access means educational and physical accessibility support services, an important consideration since the enrollment of students with disabilities increased 83.5 percent from 1993 to 1994.

Additional ways of expanding access will require careful planning, collaboration, partnerships with secondary schools, Kentucky TECH schools, universities, and businesses and industries. In short, if properly funded, the Community College System can make a major difference in both the educational and economic future of the Commonwealth.

Strategic Steps

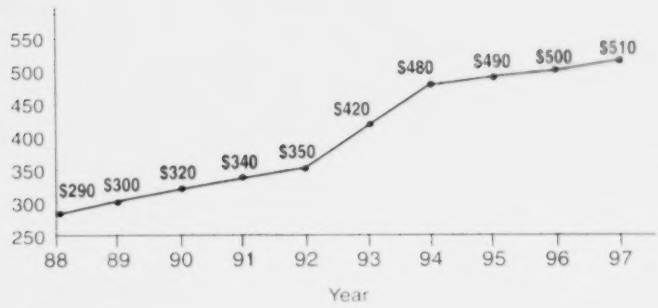
- Formulate alliances with other public and private higher education institutions, external agencies, business and industry that can increase access to higher education.
- Work with private and public senior institutions to bring upper-division college courses to community college communities.
- Increase activities to recruit, retain, and graduate minority students.
- Prepare for the KERA, Tech Prep and School-to-Work graduates from the secondary schools, including aligning curricula and extending work-based learning experiences.
- Increase dialog with high schools about the number of high school graduates that need remedial education at the community colleges.
- Promote the new statewide General Education Transfer Agreement that allows community college graduates to transfer to Kentucky's public universities as juniors, with all lower division general education requirements met.

- Promote and expand the "Degrees via Distance Learning" collaborative effort.
- Allocate increases in funding for program improvements (faculty salary catch-up, technology catch-up, position catch-up, and learning resources).
- Provide incentives for students to move from the completion of the GED to earning an associate degree.
- Use open broadcast via Kentucky Educational Television (KET), satellite downlink via KET Star Channels and the UK Robotics Center, and two-way compressed video, audio, and data via T-1 lines (telephone land lines) to reach place-bound students in the most remote regions of the state.
- Develop additional articulation and transfer agreements with Kentucky TECH, and public and private colleges and universities.
- Increase the emphasis on student support services.
- Implement strategic enrollment management as a proactive measure to increase enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.
- Increase the availability of up-to-date computer technology support for student services.

■

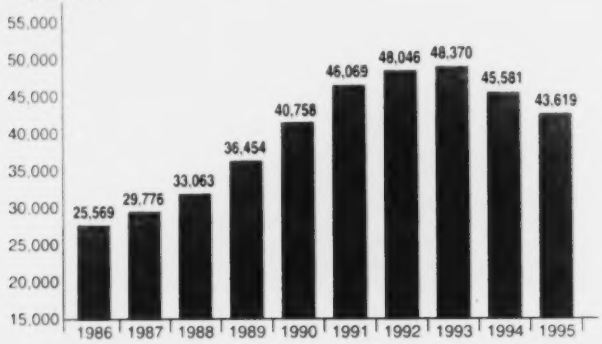
Bellarmine College, a private institution in Louisville, offers about six upper-level courses each semester at Ashland Community College.

UK Community College System
Full-Time Resident Tuition Cost Trend
1988-97



Source: CHE

UK Community College System
Headcount Enrollment By Year
1986-95



Source: UKCCS

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For the ten-year period, 1986 to 1995, enrollment increased 70.6 percent.

Effectiveness and Accountability

"It is great to be over 90."

Although most people might not agree with that statement when used in the context of age, judged in the light of effectiveness and accountability within the Community College System, it is a statement that should evoke pride and agreement.

By almost any standard of measurement, the community colleges make a positive difference in the lives of students and their communities. More than 90 percent of community college graduates surveyed listed the quality of instruction as excellent or good and would recommend the community college to a friend. More than 90 percent of employers of community college graduates surveyed ranked job skills of the new employees excellent or good. More than 90 percent of parents of community college graduates surveyed ranked the educational experiences as excellent or good.

We commend the colleges and the System for gauging their effectiveness and for using the outcomes as part of their systematic strategic planning and budgeting, ensuring continuous improvement and optimal use of scarce resources. Furthermore, we support the Council on Higher Education's emphasis on institutional performance and subsequent ties with funding. We also support the colleges' and the System's accountability efforts.

Recommendation

Our recommendation is that the colleges and the System:

- Continue to assess their effectiveness in fulfilling the threefold mission and use the results for continuous improvement.

Rationale

Kentucky's community colleges' exhaustive accountability process stems in part from their historical, thorough, internal reviews, external accreditation reviews, and in part from legislation enacted by the General Assembly in 1992. The dedication of faculty and staff to students, cultural diversity, and public service is unparalled.

In 1997, we look forward to reviewing the System's performance on its goals established in relation to baseline data collected in 1992. This multiple-year analysis minimizes random influences and fluctuations in the data and affords a more stable depiction of institutional performance.

Strategic Steps

- Strengthen the institutional research function at each of the colleges.
- Employ effective assessment methods including outcomes of students enrolled in remedial courses, student persistence toward graduation, graduate pass rates on professional licensure examinations, degrees awarded, faculty workload, student and employer questionnaires, and program reviews.
- Strengthen linkages between resource allocation and institutional effectiveness.
- Seek follow-up information on transfer students from all public four-year universities.
- Involve advisory committees in the evaluation of college programs and services.
- Use interviews, focus groups, and other techniques to gain feedback from employers.
- Use independent surveys to assess effectiveness of the colleges.

"There is just no limit to what can be accomplished if you believe in yourself and if others believe in you."

Ada Thompson
Student at
Hazard Community College

Public Awareness

The first step in accomplishing any goal is communication, and the first step in communication is to create awareness. Without awareness, there can be no communication, and thus, no action, no progress.

This presents a dilemma for the Community College System. In a recent public opinion survey conducted by the Preston Group, an independent public affairs firm, nearly 79 percent of the individuals polled expressed either excellent or good ratings for the quality of education provided by the community colleges. At the same time, however, nearly 45 percent of those polled were unaware that the Community College System has a presence in approximately 100 counties through various sites, centers, and campuses.

Clearly, too many Kentuckians are unaware of one of the greatest educational resources in our Commonwealth — the community colleges.

"My experience at Lexington Community College led to my receiving a fellowship in the Minority Leaders program. That led to an internship with a pediatric endocrinologist at Walter Reed Army Hospital."

Wentzel Mitchell
Pre-Medical Student, UK

Recommendation

Consequently, we strongly recommend that the Community College System:

- Launch an educational campaign about the purpose (mission), roles, and value of the community colleges to our communities and the Commonwealth.

Rationale

The Community College System has much to offer, but as any business person can tell you, unless the potential customers know what you have to offer, they can't be expected to buy. Community colleges have a superior product; they simply need to market it more effectively.

An educational campaign about the System's purpose and roles would go a long way toward increasing the awareness of the colleges and help potential students make informed decisions.

Strategic Steps

- Use a variety of communication avenues from the Internet and World Wide Web on one extreme, to town meetings on the other extreme, media releases, editorial board meetings, regional meetings with industrial groups, and trade show exhibits. Additional tools include publications, blue ribbon speeches, talk show appearances, videotapes, and personal communication with opinion leaders.
- Involve students, graduates, faculty, staff, advisory boards, advocates, and other members of the community college family to tell the story.
- Use an independent public affairs firm to conduct a follow-up public opinion survey.

Epilogue

"Madisonville Community College has changed my life."

Diana Lutz

The 1995 Futures Commission will be remembered as a check point which found record growth and prosperity in the midst of severely limited financial resources. This exercise gave us tremendous insight into the System and the perseverance of the men and women who are the keys to making it such a valuable part of Kentucky. It also strengthened our resolve that the community colleges continue to provide broad access to pre-baccalaureate transfer education, technical career programs, and lifelong learning. All Kentuckians deserve educational opportunities that enable them to pursue their educational and career goals.

The Most Critical Concern

After reviewing a wealth of data and listening to insights from numerous experts, our greatest concern is the lack of adequate and equitable state appropriations for all of higher education, and especially for the Community College System. The community colleges still rank last in general operating appropriations per full-time equivalent student as compared with the 15 Southern Regional Education Board States, Kentucky's public universities, and the postsecondary Kentucky TECH System. This concern was labeled critical by the 1988-89 Futures Commission. It is even more critical today.

Our Hope

In concluding our work, our hope is that these recommendations will be accepted in the spirit they were given — to guide the System as it moves into a new century and beyond. We look forward to annual progress reports. Considering the System's past successes, we are confident of its future.

A Special Thanks

Our review of the Community College System was enhanced by insights from members of the Kentucky General Assembly, remarks from UK President Dr. Charles T. Wethington, Jr., and the faculty, staff, and advisory board members.

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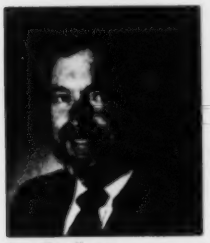

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